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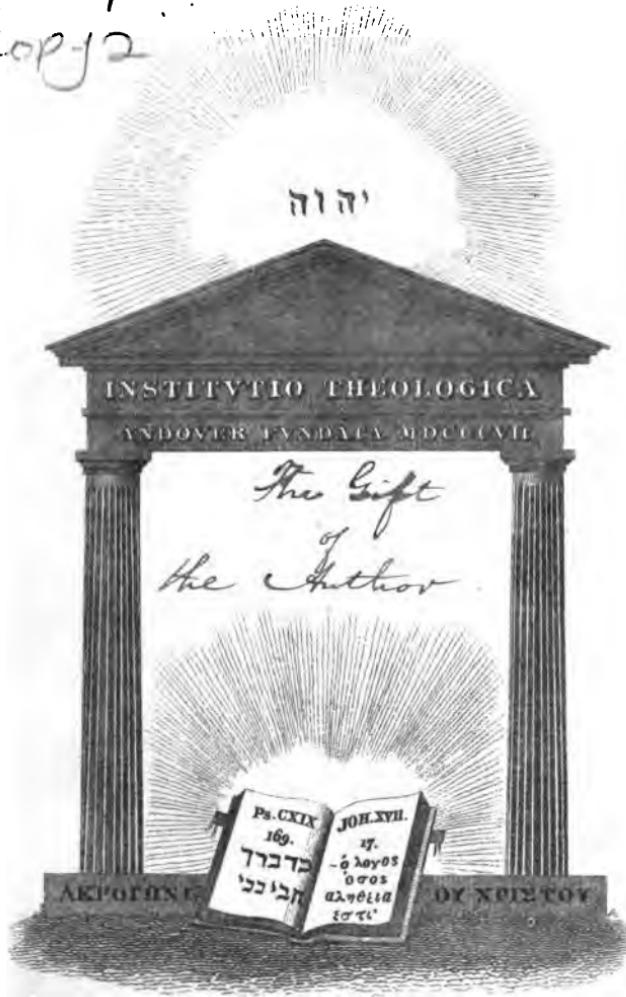
# A CATECHISM OF LIBERAL FAITH

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CHARLES F. DOLE

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LIBERAL FAITH  
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CHARLES F. DOLE

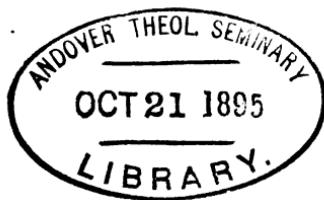
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## P R E F A C E.

THE purpose of this Catechism is to further a thoughtful understanding of the good life. It is the author's conviction that a very profound philosophy — indeed, the only tenable philosophy — underlies religion, and brings it into unity with ethics. The main lines of this spiritual philosophy are simple and beautiful, and are capable of being interestingly illustrated. The very attempt to trace the foundations of religious belief is a great intellectual and moral stimulus.

The wish here is to show that man belongs to an unseen universe; that this universe is divine and beneficent; that a certain distinct and noble type of thought, feeling, and conduct, is in accord with such a universe, and that the highest and largest life grows out of the realization of these facts. In all this, while there is much that may seem new, there is nothing sectarian. On the contrary, the views here presented are coming to control all liberal minds of whatever name. They are intended to furnish a key to the understanding of what all genuine men of different forms of faith have believed in common. There has therefore been very little need of dealing in negations or destructive criticism.

It is hoped that the form of brief questions and answers may be specially useful for the older classes of young people in our churches. The little book may also have a use for Post-

office Mission work, and for persons generally who may be inquiring the way of a reasonable religion. In reading or studying, too great stress should not be put upon the precise form of words. We deal with subjects that are larger than any single form of definition. It will be sufficient if the point of the meaning is reached, and especially if each mind is stirred to think for itself. Let the reader or student try to express the thought in more exact language if he can, or let him make correction or dissent, if the need arises. Our faith is in the freest discussion, if only the truth is sought.

The reader will observe some intentional repetition in the course of the treatment. It is hoped that this will prove to be no more than the importance of the thought requires. The author will be glad of suggestions that may serve to make the Catechism more useful.

CHARLES F. DOLE.

JAMAICA PLAIN, MASSACHUSETTS,

August, 1895.

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## A CATECHISM OF LIBERAL FAITH.

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### I.

#### WHAT MAN IS.

What do we think of when we see any person for the first time?

*Ans.* We think first of the dress, the form, the face the body, the outside.

What do we sometimes say, though the body may be good and strong, if a man proves not to have any mind?

*Ans.* We say that "the man is not all there."

Would you say that the man was "all there," though he had a bright mind, if he had no heart, or kindly feelings? Take the case of the Emperor Nero.

What do you say if one has no conscience, or moral sense? Cite the Pomeroy boy or Tito in "Romola."

What important things go to make a man, and especially an "all-round" man?

*Ans.* A good heart, intelligence, or good sense, a good conscience, a good-will, and reverence.

Is the man all there,—that is, truly a man,—if any one of these things of which we have spoken is wanting?

Suppose, for instance, that a man had lost an arm, but had these things, and another man had all his limbs, but had no reverence or no will power, which would be the "all-round" man?

Give instances of men or women who have been thus "all-round" persons.

Can you *see* those things—mind, conscience, etc.—which go to make the real man or woman, or are they all invisible?

What may we call the real man of whom the body is the outward form?

*Ans.* We may call the real, or inner man, who thinks and wills and does right and loves, the soul, or the person.

Can you think of any quite satisfactory name or definition of what we mean by the soul, or person?

*Ans.* No, the simplest facts are often the hardest to describe. Thus it is very hard to describe the common word "matter."

Is the soul, or person, visible?

Is the person less if his body is little, or even if his limbs were cut off?

Where is the person?

*Ans.* He seems to be wherever he acts; that is, where he shows his good heart or his good will. Thus his presence is not only inside his body, but it may fill a room, so that every one else in the room feels it.

What strange fact is there about persons?

*Ans.* The real person, or soul, is not only invisible, but he is one and indivisible. Thus the body is composed of parts,

and it may be cut to pieces ; but the person, the more completely he is a person, is a unity at every moment.

What word do we use to express this fact ?

*Ans.* We use the word "I." Thus we say "my body," as though it were a tool to use ; but, whenever we say "I," we mean the indivisible person, the self.

What difference in their consciousness is there between young children and grown persons ?

*Ans.* The young child is not yet conscious of himself as a person.

Do you suppose that any animal has real personality ?

What wonderful experience comes to children as they grow mature ?

*Ans.* It is a great and new experience when a person becomes conscious of himself as a unity, and, therefore, as master of his body and his senses.

What religious name has been given to the complete and all-round human person ?

*Ans.* Such a person has been called a "son of God."

A man is a soul, or person, by virtue of the invisible things,—his mind, his good-will, his good heart. Show how a good, vigorous, healthy, well-controlled body is a fitting house for the real person of a man or woman.

What is the most important question that we can ask about another person ?

*Ans.* The great and real question is not about the outside, or how he looks, but what sort of a person is he ?

## II.

### ABOUT RELIGION.

What great and puzzling questions meet us as soon as we begin to think?

*Ans.* We want to know why we are here in this world and what our destiny is; what sort of a world it is; what grand Power makes it; what kind of Power it is; whether it cares for men and loves them; and, if this is so, what we ought to do so as to come into accord with the great Power, or Life.

What is Religion?

*Ans.* Religion depends upon our answer, and especially upon some positive answer, to the questions just given. It is our thought of the reality and character of the mysterious Power in and behind all things; it is our feeling toward that Power; it is also the conduct that goes along with such thought and feeling.

How is it that there are different religions?

*Ans.* The different religions correspond to the feeling, the thought, and the knowledge of different men in different ages.

What is atheism?

*Ans.* Atheism is the denial of the ground of religion. Thus the atheist says that there is no Power above man that cares for him.

Can any one prove atheism?

*Ans.* No: on the contrary, there have probably been few real atheists. Those who have been called so have often been misunderstood. Thus Socrates in his time was wrongly called an atheist.

What are agnostics?

*Ans.* Agnostics do not think that we can know anything about the subjects of religion.

What fact has often made men agnostics?

*Ans.* The fact that there are many different religions.

Does this fact really show that we can know nothing in religion?

*Ans.* No, there have also been different ideas about matter and the outward world, but men go on studying these things.

What truth is there in agnosticism?

*Ans.* The truth is that the deepest facts are very difficult to describe.

Has there been improvement in religion?

*Ans.* Yes: as a man's thought ought to be better than a child's thought, so religion to-day is better than the religion of the time when men were living a barbarous life.

Is it humane, that is, is it the part of an all-round person not to be interested in religion?

*Ans.* No; for religion is one of the deepest, most universal, and most natural interests of mankind.

How do you account for the fact that some persons are not interested in religion?

*Ans.* We account for it in the same way as for the fact that certain persons are color-blind and others have no sense for poetry or music. Many persons also have got wrong and misleading ideas about religion, and do not, therefore, understand how interesting a subject it is.

What does religion claim to do for us?

*Ans.* As music and art satisfy certain wants in us, so religion claims to satisfy the deepest needs of our nature.

What facts should you like to be assured of?

*Ans.* We should like to be assured that our lives count for lasting good, and that the great Power, or Life, is beneficent and friendly to man. We should like to be assured that there is no evil thing in the world to be feared, and that what men call evil may be overcome or even turned into good.

How should you like permanently to feel about life?

*Ans.* We should like to have a prevailing sense of restfulness, trust, and hope.

Practically, and at its highest, what may religion be said to offer?

*Ans.* Religion offers the secret of the true or happy life.

### III.

#### **ABOUT GOD.**

What did we observe about the nature of man?

*Ans.* We observed that the most real things in man belong to an invisible world. Thus the self, or person, could not be seen or touched.

What facts do we discover when we study the world of things around us?

*Ans.* We find that here, too, the most real facts are quite invisible. Thus we cannot see force, as in the case of electricity or gravitation. We cannot even see or truly touch the atoms of which things are composed.

What wonderful fact is still more mysterious?

*Ans.* All things in nature move in measure and order.

What do we call this order?

*Ans.* We call it the reign of law.

To what class of things does order, or law, belong?

*Ans.* It belongs to the invisible world, or the world of mind.

What great fact does science teach?

*Ans.* Science teaches that we live in a universe.

What does this mean?

*Ans.* A universe is an orderly system wherein all things work harmoniously together.

How completely is the system in which we live a universe?

*Ans.* There is no comet in the heavens nor grain of sand on the seashore, that is outside of the order which fits all parts into the whole.

Can a man see this order of the universe?

*Ans.* No, to his eyes things often seem to be disorderly as in a storm; but man thinks this universe with his mind.

Which do we call most true, what the eyes see or what the mind finds out?

*Ans.* The mind puts together and explains what the senses merely find.

What other mark of a universe do we discover besides order and law?

*Ans.* So far as we can penetrate, the material of the universe is everywhere the same. Thus the same elements of matter which form our bodies are blazing in the star Sirius.

If this is a universe, what must be true about it?

*Ans.* All the forces in it must come from one Power.

What else must there be besides Power?

*Ans.* There must be mind, or intelligence; and the Power and the Mind must be one.

By what name do men call this wonderful Power or Intelligence?

*Ans.* There are many names. The most common name is God.

Is it wrong to use different names for God?

*Ans.* No name is sufficient to describe God.

What great idea do we associate with the name "God"?

*Ans.* The name "God" carries the idea of the Good, or the Beneficent.

Do we see signs of the Good in the world around us?

*Ans.* Order, Law, Beauty, and Unity are good.

What do we discover about the things in the outward world that seem to us disorderly or ugly?

*Ans.* The more we study, the more we learn that these things come under the Order, or belong to their place in the great whole and have a meaning. Thus even the particles of dust in the air obey the law of gravitation, and play a part in the beauty of the sunset.

What else do we learn about the things that we call ugly?

*Ans.* We learn that the ugly things disappear and do not last, while the beautiful Order and Unity remain.

Is there any beauty in a toad or a snake?

*Ans.* Yes, to the eye of the trained naturalist these objects also have wonder, beauty, and significance.

IV.

**ABOUT GOD AS THE GREAT CAUSE.**

Can we imagine anything—for example, a stone—as moving itself?

Can we imagine the stone as having created itself?

Can we think of the stone as having always existed?

Can we think of the particles of the stone as having always existed?

What do we want to know about the stone?

*Ans.* We want to know the cause that brought the stone into being.

Is it enough to say that gravitation brought the particles together?

*Ans.* No, we want to know then, what made gravitation.

What else do we want to know?

*Ans.* We want to know what made the chemical laws that govern the atoms of the stone and compel them to take definite proportions toward one another.

What if we suppose that the atoms of matter and gravitation and the chemical laws have all existed forever?

*Ans.* Then we want to know what makes them all work together into order and unity.

What sort of answer satisfies this last question ?

*Ans.* The great Cause which thus unifies all things must be a Being of thought and will. Thus the atoms of matter are his outward manifestation ; gravitation, or force, expresses his will ; the laws of matter spell out his thought.

Do we need further to ask what made God ?

*Ans.* No ; for our minds rest content when we say that God always was ; that is, God is eternal.

Can the mind rest content in any other thought of the cause or causes that make the world ?

*Ans.* No other thought than the thought of God gives us the idea of unity or makes a universe.

What are those called who explain all things as originating in matter ?

*Ans.* They are called materialists.

Can you conceive that eternal atoms of matter agreed together to form this world ?

Can you conceive that thought, consciousness, conscience, and will should arise out of atoms of matter ?

*Ans.* No ; for this would seem to make the atoms a sort of gods.

What idea does our mind seek after besides cause ?

*Ans.* We want to know a purpose worthy of a universe ; in other words, our minds ask, Why ?

How does the idea of God give us a fit answer to this question ?

*Ans.* It is a worthy purpose of the universe when we say that God thus expresses his good will, or beneficence.

How can we state our thought of this purpose?

*Ans.* We believe that all things move toward good.

Does this mean that things were once less good, and that God has therefore changed?

*Ans.* No, God is always the same; but, as men's minds grow, the universe seems to move and to progress.

V.

## GOD IN HUMAN LIFE.

Where does our life come from ?

*Ans.* We do not make our own life. It is in us, as though by "the breath of God."

Where does our thought come from ?

*Ans.* We cannot invent our own thought. It comes to our minds as though some one whispered it to us ; or we seem to copy it from the thought that is written in the book of Nature.

Where do good feelings come from ?

*Ans.* We do not produce our own good feelings ; but they rise at the touch of beneficence, or love.

Where does our good-will come from ?

*Ans.* Our good-will is stirred by the good-will that is shown to us.

What is the source of our life, our thought, our good feelings, and our good-will ?

*Ans.* It must be in God.

Why is it not enough to say that we get these things from other men ?

*Ans.* Because other men, our parents, our teachers, the inventors, the holy men and women, all in turn derive whatever they have from the one great source.

How, then, do wrong thoughts and feelings and ill will ever come?

*Ans.* They come because men are yet childish or disobedient, as when the pure sunlight falls through faulty glass.

Where is God?

*Ans.* God is wherever he acts.

Can we ever see God with our eyes?

*Ans.* We can see God only as we see the person of our friend. We can see him in what he does ; that is, wherever he expresses himself.

In what real ways do we thus see God?

*Ans.* We see God in the beauty of his world, in a noble deed that he inspires, in the love that looks out from our friends' eyes ; for these all tell us of the presence of God.

What great things may we say of God?

*Ans.* He is one ; he is eternal ; he is power ; he is thought ; he is cause ; he is life ; he is beneficence, or love. His universe moves for the good of his creatures.

Can we think of God as a person?

*Ans.* We think of him as a person in the sense in which we learned to call the most complete man a person. We mean that he is a real being ; and that our higher nature is akin to his nature. Man's thought answers to God's thought, and man's love to God's love.

After we have said all that we can about God, what must we modestly add ?

*Ans.* "His greatness is unsearchable" and "His ways

are past finding out." See *Rom.* xi. 33-36; also *Eccl.* xlivi. 30-33.

Of what other profound facts may we add that they are "past finding out"?

*Ans.* We must say this of our own natures, and we must say it of all things about us. Quote Tennyson's verses,—

"Flower in the crannied rock."

**CAUTION.**—We use the word "God" in different senses, straining language to express the greatness of the thought. Thus we use the word in the largest sense to include all the reality of the universe. Nature is God. All is God. We use the word also when we are only thinking of the invisible reality behind outward things. We may even say reverently, and in a still narrower sense, that man is God; that is, man is of the divine nature. Possibly, "the doctrine of the Trinity" was an unconscious attempt to express these different uses of the word "God."

It is interesting to see that we use *man* also in different senses. We use the word for all mankind: we use it also for the individual. We use it in a restricted sense for the invisible being who thinks and loves. We thus use it for the moment as though the man were apart from his body. More accurately, we use it for the whole man, body and soul. The all-round man is thus a unity. God is likewise a unity,—not apart from nature, but in and through nature.

## VI.

### ABOUT TRUTH.

What is it to "tell the truth"?

*Ans.* The exact truth is when our word or expression fits, or matches, the fact.

Is it the truth when we say, "The sun rises"?

What do we usually mean by "telling the truth"?

*Ans.* We mean that the expression fits, or matches, our thought.

When we say, "Coal is black," what do we really mean?

*Ans.* We mean that to our sense or thought coal is black. We do not know what makes the blackness of the coal. We only know what the coal says to us by its effect upon our senses.

Into what realm do all "facts" have to be translated?

*Ans.* All things have to be translated into the invisible realm of thought.

What do the laws of our minds require us to do with the "facts" that we observe?

*Ans.* We arrange the facts in classes or in order.

What do we mean by a "truth" in science?

*Ans.* We mean that a thing fits into a class or order, or that the thing is like something else. Thus we say that

diamond is carbon, meaning that the diamond is of the same stuff as the coal.

What do we mean by a true theory?

*Ans.* We mean that all the facts in a certain order fit together. In other words, the theory is our thought of how the facts are bound together. Thus we say that the Copernican theory is true, because in this theory the facts are made to match together in our thought.

Why do we believe that this is a universe?

*Ans.* We believe that this is a universe because thus in our thought all the different orders and classes of facts seem to fit together, to be related like kinsmen, and so to help explain one another.

What do we say when any fact does not yet fit into orderly place with other facts?

*Ans.* We say that we do not yet know the truth about the fact that does not fit.

What do we say about the theory or thought that does not bring all the facts under it together?

*Ans.* We say that the theory is not yet quite true or complete.

What do we think when we can discover no "use" for a thing?

*Ans.* We hope some time to find its use, that is, the truth about it.

What words is the astronomer Kepler said to have uttered at the discovery of the laws of planetary motion?

*Ans.* "O God, I think thy thoughts after thee."

What is our highest idea of truth?

*Ans.* We think that complete truth would be to see how all things match together so as to make a divine universe. Truth would be to think the thoughts of God.

What reason have we to imagine that we can in any measure think the thoughts of God?

*Ans.* Mind, or intelligence, seems to be everywhere of one and the same nature. The mind of man may, therefore, truly mirror the mind of God.

In the highest sense of the word, would there be any truth unless this were a universe?

*Ans.* There would be sensations to report, but there would be no "truths," unless things fitted together to make meaning and unity.

What may we reverently say about the things in the outward world?

*Ans.* They may be called the pictures or letters in which God's thought is written.

What may be said of the whole outward world?

*Ans.* It may be regarded as a parable of divine thought.

What is the important thing about the outward universe?

*Ans.* The important thing is not the changing appearances, but the thought which our souls read. The things pass, but the thought is eternal.

In what sense is the outward world to be regarded as real?

*Ans.* The outward world is real in so far as it expresses the realm of thought to which our souls belong.

**What fault do we find with those who say that all outward things depend upon our thought of them, so that pain or disease may be “thought away” if we choose?**

*Ans.* Outward things are more than our thought of them. They are founded and related together in the thought of God. Thus the pain or disease may be the sign of a “broken law,” and can no more be “thought away” than the law itself can be destroyed.

How far do you suppose that the mind, or one’s thought, has actual control over one’s own body?

## VII.

### WHAT AUTHORITY IS, OR HOW WE KNOW.

Of what class of facts do we say that we are sure?

*Ans.* We feel sure about those things which we have ourselves witnessed or experienced.

What may this kind of knowledge be called?

*Ans.* It may be called knowledge at first hand.

Is there chance of error about the things which we know at first hand?

*Ans.* Yes, our senses are sometimes deceived by appearances.

By what faculty do we guard ourselves against such errors?

*Ans.* We use our reason upon the things which our senses report.

What does the reason always assume?

*Ans.* The reason assumes that this is an orderly universe, and that, therefore, all true thoughts fit together.

What is the work of the reason?

*Ans.* The reason fits things together into order and unity. It is by our reason that we read the thoughts of God.

What does reason always forbid?

*Ans.* It forbids whatever is inconsistent, absurd, or contradictory.

Does a man's reason never make mistakes?

*Ans.* Only a perfect mind endowed with complete knowledge can be quite free of mistakes.

How may the individual guard against such mistakes?

*Ans.* We each have the help of other men's reason and the store of knowledge that all mankind has accumulated. Thus our belief in God is steadied by finding that the reason of a great multitude of the wisest men tallies with our own reason.

What do we do when others disagree with the report of our reason? Can reason really contradict itself?

*Ans.* We try to understand better what each one means, and we often thus arrive at better thought; or we sometimes discover why one or the other of us was in error.

What class of facts must we take "at second hand"?

*Ans.* We must take at second hand, or on the witness of others, many things which we ourselves have not witnessed. Thus the facts of history come through the testimony of others.

What do we mean by a good "authority" for a fact?

*Ans.* We mean evidence that assures us of the fact, as though we had seen it ourselves. Thus the Harvard astronomer is good authority for the existence of the planet Uranus.

How do we distinguish a good authority from a poor one?

*Ans.* We exercise our reason to determine what is good

authority. For instance, our reason tells us that the astronomers are authority about the sun and the planets; but Mr. Jasper, in Richmond, who denied that the earth turns around, was no authority.

What moral qualities help to establish authority for any fact?

*Ans.* Truthfulness, honesty, candor, or fairness, disinterestedness, and modesty.

What qualities throw doubt on any authority?

*Ans.* Conceit, opinionativeness, and the habit of exaggeration.

What appeal do we often have to make in order to be sure about certain important subjects?

*Ans.* We appeal to the common consent, or agreement, of the competent, or the experts. Thus about electricity we ask what the best electricians say.

What reasonable appeal do we make for authority in regard to the subjects of religion?

*Ans.* We ask what the best and most thoughtful persons say, who have carefully studied religion.

Is there any agreement among thoughtful persons about religion?

*Ans.* Yes, we shall find a common basis of at least a few simple but very great ideas.

Can we conceive of any other way to get facts or truth except through the human senses and the reason, spelling out the thoughts of God?

*Ans.* Some persons believe that God has communicated

special truths directly to certain men, who have therefore had authority to teach others.

Is it thought that God communicates truths in this special way now?

*Ans.* No, though some think that this is possible.

Is it thought that God ever taught men the truths of science in this special way?

*Ans.* No, only truths about religion are thought to have come so.

What name is given to this special way of getting truth by those who believe in it?

*Ans.* It is called "supernatural," or above nature. It is also called "miraculous," as being out of the usual order of nature.

If certain truths came in a "special" or exceptional way, how should we be obliged to determine that this was so?

*Ans.* We should have to apply our reason, in order to distinguish between real and false claims for this kind of special authority.

What does the reason demand about any such supposed special authority?

*Ans.* The reason must be assured that the authority is special; that the truths delivered are in accord with other truths; that they could not also have come as other truths do; and, in general, that these special truths are necessary or highly important.

Are men agreed as to what truths have come by a supernatural revelation?

*Ans.* On the contrary, the beliefs for which men appeal

most stoutly to "supernatural" authority are precisely those about which the best minds have differed. Many also of the wisest men hold that we get the truths of religion in the natural way in which we discover all other truths.

**From whom have we agreed that all truths must proceed?**

*Ans.* All truths must come from God, the Universal Intelligence.

If all truths come from God, is there any real issue between those who believe in a supernatural revelation and those who hold that religion comes to man by a natural order of growth?

If all truths are from God, are the truths of religion more sacred than other truth?

*Ans.* No; for all truths go together to make the divine universe.

To what may we liken the relation of nature, or outward things, to mind?

*Ans.* It is like the relation of the letters of a book to the thought of the book. The letters serve to express or reveal the thought.

In what sense may we rightly use the word "supernatural"?

*Ans.* We may use it to express our idea that the realm of intelligence to which we really belong is above the realm of outward things, or matter.

**What is the final authority for truth?**

*Ans.* The reason of man, or, in other words, the mind of man, answering back to the divine mind is the final authority.

On what grounds may we say that we are sure of the reality of God?

*Ans.* We believe in God because the thought of God "makes sense"; that is, satisfies the demand of our reason for fitness, harmony, and unity, whereas nothing else makes any sense.

## VIII.

### THE BIBLE AND HOLY BOOKS.

What is the best known book in the world?

*Ans.* The Bible.

How is the Bible made up?

*Ans.* It is made up of many different books, written at various times, mostly by Hebrews or Jews.

What material does the Bible contain?

*Ans.* It may be thought of as the library of the Hebrew people, containing their history, their laws, their stories, their ancient customs, the lives of their great men, their poetry and hymns, the sermons of their teachers, their best thoughts, and their religion.

Why is the Bible important for us?

*Ans.* Our religion and many of our institutions and ideas have their origin in the Bible.

Is the Bible equally important and interesting throughout?

*Ans.* No, there are widely different levels of value in the Bible. Parts of it hardly interest us at all.

What is one reason for this difference of value?

*Ans.* The early Hebrew people, like most other early nations, were barbarous; and their thoughts and their religion were therefore low and sometimes childish.

Whose work are the best parts of the Bible?

*Ans.* The most precious parts of the Bible are the work of certain poets, as in the Psalms; of a few great preachers or prophets; and especially of Jesus\* and Paul in the New Testament.

What idea do many people hold of the way in which the Bible was written?

*Ans.* Many say that the Bible is a "supernatural" book.

What do they mean by this?

*Ans.* They think that the ideas in it, if not the very words, came in a special way from God, as in the case of no other book.

What insuperable difficulty is there in this view of the Bible?

*Ans.* There are many ideas, specially in the earlier parts of the Bible, which are not worthy of God, but are plainly the rude thoughts of Hebrew men. Thus men used to think that God was pleased with the sacrifices of animals, that he was a "jealous God," and that he required the extermination of his enemies.

Are there important truths in the Bible which are not to be found elsewhere?

*Ans.* No, the study of religion shows that its great ideas are all to be found in many sources besides the Bible.

Are there other holy or sacred books besides the Bible?

*Ans.* The Hindus, the Persians, the Chinese, the Buddhists, and others have also their own sacred books.

\*While Jesus inspired the great teachings of the New Testament, he did not leave any writings behind him.

What collection of wise and good books is sometimes added to our Bible?

*Ans.* The books of the Apocrypha.

Is there any distinct line that separates the best books of the Apocrypha, as Ecclesiasticus, from such books as Daniel and the Song of Solomon in the Old Testament?

What makes a book "holy"?

*Ans.* Great and helpful thoughts, such as enoble men's lives, make a book holy.

What ancient books can you think of that belong to this list, besides the Bible?

What books of our own time are really holy books?

What sacred history is there besides the Bible history?

*Ans.* The history of the growth of our own national liberties, as in the Revolution and the Civil War, is doubtless sacred history.

What poetry is sacred besides the Psalms?

*Ans.* Our own hymn-books, for instance, contain sacred poetry.

Does the fact that there are other holy books make the Bible less sacred or precious?

## IX.

### INSPIRATION.

Where have we agreed that all helpful and noble thoughts come from?

What word has sometimes been used to express the idea that God communicates truth to man?

*Ans.* It has been said that truth comes by "inspiration."

What does inspiration really mean?

*Ans.* Inspiration means the fact that the spirit, or mind, of man catches the thought of God. In other words, it is because man is akin to God that he can "think God's thoughts after him."

If we call it inspiration by which Isaiah or Tennyson strikes off a beautiful verse, shall we also call it inspiration when Newton or Darwin or Edison catches the vision of a new idea?

Is it also inspiration when a new and good thought comes to any of us?

Is there any reason why we may not reverently say that God thus *speaks* to us?

What would an "inspired man" be?

*Ans.* A person would be inspired who always thought true and good thoughts.

## X.

### ABOUT HOLY MEN.

What do we mean by saying that any man has "genius"?

*Ans.* We mean that such a one as the musician Beethoven, has great and uncommon gifts.

Is the man of genius of a different order from others?

Do men ever have "genius" for goodness or religion?

*Ans.* Yes, the reason why we prize the Bible is because so many of the Hebrew race had a genius for goodness.

Name some of the men or women who have had a "genius for goodness."

What has been the fault to be found with many of the people of genius?

*Ans.* They have often failed to be "all-round" men.

Can you think of some who have had a genius for goodness and have been also "all-round" men?

Have there ever been any men or women with whose character we find no fault?

What does the word "holy" strictly mean?

*Ans.* It means whole, well, or sound.

Would a holy man be a natural man?

*Ans.* Certainly. The whole, all-round, good man simply fulfils his nature.

What ancient mistake was made about the holy, or good, man?

*Ans.* He was often supposed to be a man of feeble body.

What is the complete thought about the good man?

*Ans.* He is the man whose body also is strong and sound, so as to do his good will the better.

In what way is man, when thus at his best, like God?

*Ans.* We think of the majestic and beautiful outward universe as the form of God's manifestation. We likewise hold that a beautiful body expresses a noble soul. The man is thus one, body and soul.

What fine characteristic have the men of genius?

*Ans.* They have the gift of inspiring others with the spark of their genius or their goodness.

## XI.

### **ABOUT JESUS.**

Whom do we generally think of as the best man who ever lived?

What was characteristic of Jesus' life?

*Ans.* He lived the life of a whole, or true man.

What other way is there to say the same thing?

*Ans.* He lived like a child of God.

What does this mean?

*Ans.* It means that Jesus showed the nature of God. A child of God lives to show his good-will, because God's life is Good-Will.

What made it easy for the early men to think of Jesus as the son of God?

*Ans.* Men had already been used to thinking of their heroes as sons of God. When, therefore, Jesus, a new type of hero, appeared, and men recognized the beauty of his humanity, his devotion, and his disinterestedness, they said, "Here is the true son of God."

What rare and beautiful things did Jesus have a "genius" for?

*Ans.* Jesus had a genius for righteousness and love and for religion.

How do we know this?

*Ans.* We know that he was quite willing to die for righteousness, love, and religion.

What wonderful power did Jesus show?

*Ans.* He showed the power of a good man over evil.

How did he show his power over evil?

*Ans.* He faced toil, pain, and death, and changed the evil into good. Thus, after his cruel death, there was more love in the world than there had ever been before.

Can other men exercise this power over evil?

*Ans.* Yes, every one who shows good-will in labor and pain, and bears trouble without murmuring, likewise changes evil to good.

What sort of conduct, or demeanor, always overcomes evil?

*Ans.* The demeanor of a child of God, who faces the evil and is not afraid of being hurt.

What do many persons say further about Jesus?

*Ans.* Many say that he was more than a true man, and even that he was God.

Can anything higher be said of Jesus than to say that he was a true man?

Did Jesus ever claim to be more than a true man?

*Ans.* There is no evidence that he ever made such a claim.

Have other true men ever lived and died for the sake of righteousness, love, and religion?

*Ans.* Yes, often. *Give examples.*

Could we love and admire Jesus so well if he had been other than a real man?

What facts bring us into close sympathy with the real Jesus?

*Ans.* The facts that he had real temptations as we have; that he had hours of depression and discouragement, when he could not foresee the use of his life; that he suffered from misunderstanding and loneliness.

If he had been God,\* as some say, could he ever have been discouraged?

If he had been "the only son of God" from heaven, would it have been any great thing to come into this world for a short life?

What did Jesus really give for the sake of his love?

*Ans.* He gave all that he had.

What divine quality is in true love?

*Ans.* The love which gives all without grudging is of the infinite nature.

In what sense may Jesus be called the "ideal" man?

*Ans.* All men ought to be willing, like Jesus, to give all for the sake of righteousness and love. In other words, the life of good-will which Jesus lived is the largest possible human life..

Was Jesus' idea of life at all new at the time?

*Ans.* It was new to most men.

\*The word "God" is here used in the largest sense, meaning the infinite life. It is only in this sense that we may object to calling Jesus God. (See Matt. xix. 17.) In the narrower sense, Jesus taught that all good men may be called sons of God; that is, of the divine nature. (Compare also John x. 34-38.)

If Jesus' idea of life is the true idea for all, why has it not been more familiar to men?

*Ans.* We believe that it was a new or higher step of human growth, or development. Like all new things, it was not at first understood.

Is this consistent with our thought of a growing world?

*Ans.* This is precisely what we should expect in a growing world. Thus it is a new stage in the growth of each child when he sees for himself what the whole, or "all-round life," is.

## XII.

### JESUS' TEACHINGS.

Did Jesus intend to establish a new religion?

*Ans.* There is no evidence that this was his intention.

Did he teach new doctrines?

*Ans.* No, he appealed to what was already in the thought of his people.

Where are his most characteristic teachings?

*Ans.* They are mostly in "the Sermon on the Mount" and in a few of the parables in Luke.

How may his teachings be summed up?

*Ans.* They are in the two great commandments of love to God and love to man.

Under what familiar name did Jesus think of God?

*Ans.* He thought of God as the heavenly Father.

How did he think of men?

*Ans.* He held that all men are our brethren.

Whom did he count the happiest people? *See the Beatitudes.*

Whom did he call the greatest man?

*Ans.* He called him greatest who did most good, or served others best.

What did he think the most fatal error?

*Ans.* He thought it the most fatal error to be selfish, or, as he expressed it, to "save" one's own life.

What did he think made life most real and abundant?

*Ans.* He thought that life grows rich by giving and by loving.

What did Jesus think about property?

*Ans.* He held that all things are ours in trust to do good with.

What was the religion of Jesus' people?

*Ans.* The Hebrew religion.

What difficulty in the Hebrew religion prevented it from spreading among all men?

*Ans.* The Hebrew religion required people to follow certain customs and observances; in other words, people had to become Jews in order to join it.

Did Jesus quite free himself from Hebrew customs and ideas?

*Ans.* No; if so, he would not have been truly a man.

What curious ideas were common in Jesus' time?

*Ans.* People commonly believed in the coming day of judgment, in a Hebrew Messiah or national Deliverer, and in evil spirits that possessed men.

Did Jesus teach that any of these things were necessary to religion? *See the parable of the Good Samaritan; also Matt. xxv. 37-41.*

How were Jesus' teachings suited to make a universal religion?

*Ans.* The teachings on which Jesus laid stress are such

as appeal to men's conscience and their sense of religion everywhere.

Have other great teachers of religion taught like Jesus?

*Ans.* Yes, many of the noblest teachings of China, India, Persia, Greece, and Rome, are like Jesus' words. Thus the Chinese Confucius taught the Golden Rule.

What beautiful trait is to be found in Jesus' life and teachings?

*Ans.* Jesus is remarkable for his hopefulness and enthusiasm.

How may we sum up his faith, or creed?

*Ans.* He held that this is God's world; that is, a divine universe.

How may we sum up his teachings about conduct?

*Ans.* He taught men to live as though this were God's world, or to live like children of God.

### XIII.

#### GOD'S CHILDREN, OR THE INCARNATION.

What do we mean by calling a man a "son of God"?

*Ans.* We mean that the nature of God is in man. In other words, the soul of man which thinks and loves is akin to the Spirit of the universe.

What parable of this do we see in nature?

*Ans.* Matter is the same everywhere. So mind, or soul, is the same wherever it is.

What did men come to believe about Jesus?

*Ans.* They said that God was revealed in human form.

What did they call this idea?

*Ans.* They called it the incarnation, or the dwelling of God in a man.

What truth did men thus seek to convey?

*Ans.* They meant that the sympathy, or love, in Jesus was really the love of God. In other words, Jesus' love sprang from its source in God.

How did men struggle, in the words of an ancient creed, to express this magnificent idea of the divineness of man?

*Ans.* They said of the nature of Jesus that he was "very God of very God."

What was the mistake in the ancient doctrines of the incarnation?

*Ans.* The mistake was in thinking that God was only revealed in one man.

What is the larger truth?

*Ans.* God is revealed wherever truth, justice, mercy, love, shine in any human life.

What did Jesus himself teach?

*Ans.* Jesus taught that all men are God's children; that is, all of us ought to show God's love to one another.

Tell any stories of noble conduct that reveal the nature of God in the same way in which Jesus revealed it.

XIV.

**CONDUCT, OR THE VIRTUES.**

Name the chief virtues which characterize a noble life.

What common method have men used for inculcating these virtues?

*Ans.* Men have laid down rules, or "commandments," about them.

Can one be made honest or truthful or temperate by laws?

Is it virtue when a man wants to do wrong, and is only restrained by fear of the consequences?

What must one do one's self in order to have a virtue?

*Ans.* One must make the virtue—for example, truth—one's own law.

From what single spring do all the virtues proceed?

*Ans.* They proceed from good-will, or love.

When a man has true love, or good-will, can he harm his neighbor? Can such a man ever be false? Is there any virtue that a man will lack who has real love, or good-will?

Will love alone free a person from errors of conduct, and from thus doing harm to others?

*Ans.* No, there is need of intelligence to guide the good-will.

Would one who had perfect intelligence ever do wrong?

*Ans.* No, for perfect intelligence would see that the way of good-will is the way of the fullest life.

What may we then say that noble conduct is?

*Ans.* Noble conduct is good-will, or love, directed according to the circumstances of each case by intelligence. Thus the same good-will, which in one case means courage, in another case takes the form of prudence; and prudence may require as true hardihood as is needed in braving danger. *Illustrate the kind of moral cost sometimes involved in saying "No."*

What do we mean when we judge men by their motives?

*Ans.* We wish to know whether they act from good-will.

How do we best learn and teach the virtues?

*Ans.* We learn them through the example, or the influence, of admirable persons.

Why is this?

*Ans.* It is because noble conduct is the most beautiful, persuasive, and inspiring thing in the world. In other words, our natures answer to God's nature.

What word sums up the influence of a beautiful life?

*Ans.* We say that such a life has the "good spirit."

What special word has come to mark the good spirit?

*Ans.* We often say "the spirit of Christ" or "the Christian spirit."

What is the real meaning of these words?

*Ans.* They mean such a spirit, or influence, as Jesus showed; in other words, the good-will of a whole, or "all-round" man.

XV.

## CONSCIENCE.

What inward force urges one to do right?

*Ans.* We call the force "conscience."

What simple explanation of the working of conscience may we give?

*Ans.* We may call it the will of God urging the wills of men to the way of life.

What may we liken it to?

*Ans.* We may liken it to the pressure of gravitation in the outward world.

What causes the discomfort when one does wrong?

*Ans.* It is as though the soul of man made resistance to, or was out of line with, the pressure of God. Or we may say that the soul which does wrong is "out of gear."

What always brings peace of conscience?

*Ans.* We always have peace in our souls as soon as our wills come into line with the Good-Will and yield to its motion.

Does conscience tell us precisely what to do?

*Ans.* No, conscience only gives us the right direction, or attitude. Whatever is right or good, it bids, do it.

How can we find out precisely what is right?

*Ans.* We find out by using intelligence. We also learn

by the experience of mankind what courses of conduct are beneficent.

Does right change from age to age?

*Ans.* What men think right changes as men learn and grow wiser. Thus conscience always urges us toward the way of justice; but men have found out that justice demands more than they imagined in the days of King David or Ulysses.

Why do men's consciences seem to require different courses of conduct?

*Ans.* Men differ as to their sensitiveness to the pressure of the Good-Will, as compasses differ in sensitiveness toward the magnetic pole. Men also differ in their intelligence and in their knowledge of the facts of life.

What is conscientiousness?

*Ans.* It is a nice sensitiveness of conscience.

What is "a morbid conscience"?

*Ans.* It is the conscience of one who is afraid to do wrong rather than desirous to do right. It is an egotistic, or perhaps a selfish, conscience.

Is it possible to be quite conscientious,—that is, afraid to do wrong,—and yet be without good-will?

What is a good conscience?

*Ans.* It is the conscience of one who loves to give his own will to co-operate with the great Good-Will.

## XVI.

### THE WILL.

Do you recognize a difference between the wish, or desire, for anything and the *will* to have it?

In what does the difference consist?

*Ans.* The desire alone does not mean any effort; but the will consists in an actual effort, or motion, to get the thing wished for.

Is this an outward motion or is it within the mind?

*Ans.* It is an inward motion of the self, or a decision, as though one voted to take a certain action.

Do you take the will to be a single faculty or power of the self?

*Ans.* No, it is rather the whole self in process of motion.

Can the will be compelled from outside; for example, by force or the constraint of other men?

*Ans.* The will can only be moved from within.

What is this characteristic of the will often called?

*Ans.* It is called "the freedom of the will."

What is the source of the action of the will?

*Ans.* The action of the will has its source, or rise, in the total contents of the man's being. In other words, his will at any moment is the expression of himself, including

his appetites, his desires, his aims or ideals, his habits, his character, the sum of his knowledge, the fulness, or flow of his life.

What do we mean when we say that a man is responsible for an act?

*Ans.* We mean that it is the man's own act and not forced upon him from without.

When a man is thus responsible, what do we say of the consequences of his act?

*Ans.* We say that he deserves the consequences; that is, they belong to him and go with his act.

Suppose a man was altogether good, and his body likewise in good control, what would be the action of his will?

*Ans.* His acts of will would be also good and harmonious, flowing naturally at every moment from the good life within.

Whose will alone is unchangeable?

*Ans.* God's will is changeless, because he is the eternally good.

Can a man alter his will?

*Ans.* No, unless the self is altered. Thus, if a new thought comes, a new wish, a fresh fact, or a new inflow of life, the self, being different, may change its will, or motion.

How can the will be influenced from without; for example, by another person?

*Ans.* The self may be altered by the other, who is able to stir a new feeling or to contribute a new idea, or even to add the motion of his own will to the feebler will of the first.

Does one ever act without the will to act?

*Ans.* It sometimes seems as if one were swept into action by a strong appetite or by a passion, like anger, without any will or even against will.

What kinds of persons are most likely to be thus swept off their feet by tides of passion?

*Ans.* Young children, savage people, the ignorant, and the self-indulgent; in short, those persons who are nearest to the animal nature.

How far do animals possess will?

What is the characteristic of the will of childish persons?

*Ans.* Their will is controlled by passions and prejudice, and subject to whims and caprice. Thus you cannot depend upon their actions.

What is the difference between a good will and a bad will?

*Ans.* The good will is constant, but the bad will is liable to change.

Would you say that the possessor of a bad will is "free"? Is the slave of a bad habit, such as intemperance, free? Is a child brought up among thieves quite "free" to tell the truth and be honorable?

What binds or controls the will of bad men?

*Ans.* Their own degraded selves, their bad habits, their false ideas, bind them so as to make it very hard to lead a good life.

What encouragement have we in our efforts for moral education?

*Ans.* We may hope to throw such ennobling influences

about persons and to fill their minds with such good thoughts as to bind them over to the side of good.

**Was Jesus free to do injustice?**

*Ans.* His conscience and good heart made it impossible to do injustice.

**What binds the will of a good man?**

*Ans.* His good nature binds him to will what is good.

**What may we say of the will of God?**

*Ans.* We may reverently say that his goodness binds him always to will what is good.

**What is a good will?**

*Ans.* A good will is a good person moving to do good.

**Wherein is God free?**

*Ans.* He is free because, whatever he wills, he loves to do.

**To what may we liken the most perfect man's freedom?**

*Ans.* It is like God's. Whatever the good man does, being beneficent, is that which he loves to do.

If a good man could see the end from the beginning, would he ever wish to do anything else than the right thing?

*Ans.* No, such a one would at every moment be doing exactly what expressed his own nature.

**Wherein are the real freedom and joy of life?**

*Ans.* Real freedom and joy consist in the fullest expression of a good-will.

**Wherein does the evil or ignorant man miss freedom?**

*Ans.* A man misses true freedom whenever his will, being bad or selfish, expresses his lower nature, but does not ex-

press his best self. Moreover, the selfish man misses the unity which a real person possesses.

What resistance checks the selfish will?

*Ans.* The selfish wills of other men resist it. It also runs counter to the great Good-Will.

To what may we liken the motion of a "free will"?

*Ans.* It is like the movement of a star in its orbit.

To what may we liken the motion of a bad will?

*Ans.* It is like a train off its track.

Does a selfish will really resist God's will?

*Ans.* No, only in appearance, in the view of the man who feels the resistance; but the divine will compels all things the way of good.

To what may we liken this resistance?

*Ans.* It is like the prisoner who is dragged along, as compared with the soldier who marches as his leader commands.

What gives momentum to the wills of good men?

*Ans.* They move with the freedom of the divine motion.

Does the human will at its best originate anything?

*Ans.* On the contrary, the human will has its source in God.

How is a good-will created in any man?

*Ans.* It seems to be called into being by the action of goodness. In this case "like begets like."

## XVII.

### HABITS.

What do good habits have to do with the health of the soul?

*Ans.* Good habits are like the motions which the skilled artist uses to express his art.

How do we form habits?

*Ans.* Every thought, word, or act goes toward forming some habit of the soul.

On what inward fact do the habits depend?

*Ans.* The habits express the attitude or the will of the inward self. Good habits express the person's ruling goodwill.

What strange fact on the physical side of our life expresses the "force of habit"?

*Ans.* The physiologists tell us that our acts and thoughts register themselves by changes in the tissue of the brain. Our good or bad habits, therefore, become written into our very bodies, and unconsciously bind us over toward good or evil.

Is it possible for the habits to be bad while the will is good?

*Ans.* Not for long. A bad habit, as, for example, the habit of impatience or anger, reacts on the inward health

and alters the good-will: whereas, if the good-will is present, it alters bad habits to good ones.

What do we really mean when we say that "we do right because it is right"?

*Ans.* We mean that right is the straightest channel for love to run in. Right is the line of least resistance. It is the "king's highway."

Which is the more essential thing, to do right or to *be* right?

What is it, then, to *be* right?

*Ans.* To *be* right is the habit of doing right. In other words, it is to have constant good-will in our hearts.

Wherein is love more than obedience to duty?

*Ans.* Love sees intelligently what duty is for, and is therefore glad to obey.

What may come to be the one great habit of the soul?

*Ans.* The habit of good-will, or of acting from love.

## XVIII.

### **FAITH, OR LOVE TOWARD GOD.**

If a man acted intelligently by the Golden Rule, or by love to his fellow-men, yet without thought of God, in what respect, if any, would his character lack completeness?

In what respect did we agree that Jesus differed from many very noble men?

*Ans.* Jesus' character was marked by his enthusiasm, or hopefulness.

What was the source of this remarkable hopefulness?

*Ans.* His hopefulness was rooted in a confidence in the righteousness and love of God. In Jesus' thought goodness was at the heart of the universe.

What do we call this trust in the eternal goodness?

*Ans.* It is called "faith."

To what may it be likened?

*Ans.* Faith may be likened to the confidence with which an architect, having obeyed the laws of building, trusts his bridge or other work to bear the strain of use. Thus the architect, or the man who understands the architect's plan has a higher kind of confidence than the ignorant workman, however obedient he may be.

What is the ground of the architect's trust or faith?

*Ans.* The architect sees that this is a universe upon whose laws of matter and force one can rely.

What is the ground of the good man's trust or faith?

*Ans.* The man sees that this is a moral and spiritual universe on whose laws of righteousness one can also depend.

For what great fact do the constant and righteous laws seem to stand?

*Ans.* They seem to stand for beneficence, or good-will; in other words, for the love of God.

What is the appropriate feeling of man toward this good-will or love of God?

*Ans.* The natural feeling is of satisfaction, restfulness, loyalty, and love.

How does this sort of feeling affect conduct?

*Ans.* Faith or love to God adds to man the mighty sense that in his effort to do right and show forth good-will the eternal and universal life is with him. It is intelligent as compared with blind obedience.

What does this faith signify?

*Ans.* It signifies that "no evil thing can prosper and no good thing can really fail."

What further does this mean?

*Ans.* It means that this is a world of progress; in other words, that true lives count and help toward greater good to come.

In what faith, therefore, is the hope of human progress based?

*Ans.* The idea of human progress is really a sort of faith in God.

What justifies our expectation that reforms and other desirable changes can be brought about?

*Ans.* We expect reforms and improvements in human welfare, because we live in a good universe; that is, in God's world. We could not expect amelioration in a bad, indifferent, or godless world.

Was Jesus alone in his happy faith in the good world and the good God?

*Ans.* No, noble men have commonly shared this faith.

What was the secret of Jesus' enthusiasm in his faith?

*Ans.* Jesus trusted his life to his faith and took the good of it.

What may Jesus' hearty faith be likened to?

*Ans.* Jesus' faith in God was like the swimmer who, while others are afraid of the water, throws himself into it, and is buoyed up.

Is there any conflict between this thought of faith and reason?

*Ans.* On the contrary, faith, or trust in a divine universe, is the highest result of reason.

How is such faith further proved?

*Ans.* Faith in God is proved by the result; namely, that life, as in Jesus' case, is thereby made strong, restful, joyous, efficient, and complete.

What is a proof of any good theory?

*Ans.* It is a proof if the theory "works."

State the noblest "working theory" of life.

*Ans.* "This is God's world. Act, then, accordingly. Live as though it were God's world."

## XIX.

### THE UNIVERSE LIFE.

If any one lived as though this were God's world, what sort of conduct would ensue?

*Ans.* One's conduct would be controlled by good-will.

What sort of companionship would such a person give?

*Ans.* It would be friendly, hearty, hopeful, and gladsome companionship.

Would any one who thus lived as though this were God's world be a "good Christian"?

Would such a person find himself "at home" with an honest Jew or Mohammedan or Buddhist? *See Acts x; also Lessing's "Nathan the Wise."*

Would this person be able to get along well with ignorant or savage or selfish men?

Do you think that childish people would like the man who lived "as though this were God's world"?

What is the human quality most desired everywhere?

*Ans.* Good-will, or the will to help and serve others.

Do you suppose that there is any planet inhabited by intelligent beings where the life of good-will is not the law?

What, then, may we call this kind of life?

*Ans.* We may call it the "universe life."

What does this name signify?

*Ans.* It signifies that the life of love, or good-will, holds throughout the universe.

What further is involved in this name?

*Ans.* This life is one with the life of God.

Did Jesus teach this? *See the Lord's Prayer; compare also John xvii. 21-24.*

What right or privilege may we say that this kind of life confers?

*Ans.* It gives "the citizenship of the universe"; that is, the birthright of the sons of God.

What meaning do we now get for "heaven"?

*Ans.* Heaven is wherever any soul lives the universe life. Whoever does the deeds of love is in heaven.

May heaven, then, be here and now?

*Ans.* Certainly. This is God's world.

What may we call those hours of our life when we have heartily lived as in a divine universe?

*Ans.* These were the hours of heaven.

What is the characteristic of this best life of man?

*Ans.* The life of noble conduct, or of good-will, is spiritual; in other words, it does not depend upon whether one is rich or poor, or upon the circumstances, but upon the inner condition, or the health of the soul.

Is it possible to maintain the perfect health of the soul constantly?

*Ans.* As with the bodily health, there are various differences or degrees of health, according to the completeness of the obedience which one renders to the laws of the good life. We may say that perfect health is the normal condition of every soul.

## XX.

### IMMORTALITY, OR THE ETERNAL LIFE.

To what realm does man, as a conscious, thinking being, belong?

*Ans.* He belongs to the invisible realm of thought, or spirit.

What has the realm of thought to do with the outward world?

*Ans.* The outward world seems to be only the form or the expression of thought.

What have we called man, at his best?

*Ans.* We have called him "the child of God."

What is the nature of God's life?

*Ans.* It is immortal.

What do we mean when we call man, at his best, "the child of God"?

*Ans.* We mean that man shares the nature of God.

What characteristics have matter and force?

*Ans.* No force is wasted, and no atom of matter is destroyed.

What is the tendency of the movement of life in the universe?

*Ans.* The movement of life is a growth, or development.

What is the course of this growth?

*Ans.* It is toward finer and more spiritual forms, and from the outward things up to the realm of thought and good-will.

What is the highest type of this development that we know?

*Ans.* It is in the lives of men and women of the type of Jesus.

What sort of life do such persons live?

*Ans.* They live the lives of the children of God.

By what other names do we call this kind of life?

*Ans.* We call it the life of heaven, the universe life, or the eternal life.

What do we mean by these names?

*Ans.* We mean that this kind of life does not depend upon place or time or circumstances, but it is in harmony with the universe.

What happy consciousness have we at our best?

*Ans.* We have a consciousness that our lives are at one with the life of God.

Have we, at our best, any fear of physical ill or death?

*Ans.* No, at our best, our souls seem to be above the range of any bodily evil.

What is it reasonable to believe about the lives of men of Jesus' sort?

*Ans.* It is reasonable to believe that their souls are deathless.

**What is the alternative to this beautiful thought?**

*Ans.* The only alternative is to suppose that this wonderful life of man ends in nothingness.

**What absurdity is involved here?**

*Ans.* It is irrational, in a world where no force is lost and all lower things have a use toward what is higher, to suppose that the highest result in the splendid cosmic process ends in nothing.

**What sort of rational interpretation does a world of thought and order demand?**

*Ans.* It demands interpretation into terms of life, and not of death.

**What has the hope of higher life to do with our present life?**

*Ans.* Hope is an essential element in the health of the soul.

**What is the characteristic of the most ample and efficient lives?**

*Ans.* They are lives of the largest hopefulness.

**Is this hopefulness selfish?**

*Ans.* No, in the best men it is the hopefulness of love.

**Is it not an argument for the truth of this hope that the presence of it makes fuller life, and the absence of it hurts the life?**

**Is it any real reason against this great hope that we cannot see precisely how it will be realized?**

*Ans.* No, it is the characteristic of all future things that we cannot see precisely how they will come.

With what great and profound thought does the immortal  
hope tally?

*Ans.* It fits the thought of a divine universe.

What is the test of a reasonable thought?

*Ans.* The test of the truth is that it fits, or "makes sense."

## XXI.

### WORSHIP.

What religious rites and ceremonies can you call to mind?

What forms of religious observance are used in your own church?

How did early men imagine that they could please God?

*Ans.* They imagined that God, like a human sovereign, would like gifts, sacrifices, hymns of praise, and obeisance.

Show how men still try to please God in these outward forms of worship.

Is there any truth in this early idea of worship?

What do we mean by the sentiment of reverence?

*Ans.* Reverence is the feeling of admiration which instinctively goes with the thought of the divine power, wisdom, beauty, and goodness.

What use is there in expressing our sense of reverence?

*Ans.* The law of all feeling is that it grows by fitting expression. Thus the singing of a noble hymn may deepen noble feeling.

What use may there be in setting apart special buildings, as churches, for purposes of worship?

*Ans.* By the well-known law of the association of ideas certain places and circumstances become suggestive of noble thoughts or feelings.

**Does reverence make any one better morally ?**

*Ans.* Yes, the admiration of goodness tends to make us good.

What movement goes naturally with our reverence, at the thought of the grandeur of the moral law ?

*Ans.* The movement of our wills to obey.

What do we mean by thankfulness or gratitude ?

*Ans.* Thankfulness is our sense of delight and obligation in receiving kindness, or love.

Does God need our thanks ?

*Ans.* No ; but it is in our nature to express our gladness at being loved. Not to be grateful then would be to harm and hurt the divine nature within us.

What may we reverently say pleases God in our worship ?

*Ans.* It pleases God that we should come into the mood or attitude of love ; in other words, that our wills should come into accord with his will.

Why should this "please" God ?

*Ans.* Because God is love, and the true life of his children likewise is love.

Can there be any true worship unless the worshipper is in the spirit of love ?

What did Jesus teach about this in "the Sermon on the Mount" ?

What use is there in worshipping with others ?

*Ans.* Reverence, obedience to the right, and love bring all men to a common level, bind us together, and make our hearts beat with the common humanity as brothers.

To what may we liken the common feeling of men who meet in the thought of the presence of God?

*Ans.* We may liken this to a mighty current of force, which sweeps all the separate and individual wills of men together.

What is the test of all real worship?

*Ans.* The sole test of the honesty of the worship is good thoughts, good words, good deeds, good lives.

## XXII.

### FORMS AND OBSERVANCES.

What reasonable ground can we find for keeping any outward form of worship?

*Ans.* The form is good, if it serves to develop the good spirit in the people who use it, or if it gives the good spirit expression.

What use is there, on this ground, in the service of baptism?

*Ans.* The service of baptism is good, if it stands as a sign to express the will to live a clean life.

What meaning is there in the baptism of children?

*Ans.* The service means the consecration of the child, in the loving thought of God, to the noble and Christ-like life.

What purpose do the parents express in such a consecration?

*Ans.* They purpose to win the love of the child for the good life.

What is your thought of "the communion service"?

Do you think that Jesus intended to establish such a service?

Is it important how such an observance originated, provided it may be made useful toward the good life?

Who may rightly come to the communion service?

*Ans.* Any may come who find use or help in it.

Is it essential or necessary to use such a service?

*Ans.* No, there is no outward form or observance which is essential to the good life. It is, however, a general rule that good feelings thrive by having expression in fitting outward forms. Thus love grows by being uttered.

Why do men observe Sunday as a religious day?

What old commandment is often cited to enforce the keeping of Sunday?

Does this Hebrew commandment apply to the modern Sunday?

For what good reason may the State make Sunday laws?

*Ans.* On the ground that a weekly day of rest is for the common benefit of society.

What special reason holds good for using Sunday time for noble worship or the consideration of religion?

*Ans.* Men have the time for these things on Sunday which they often lack on other days.

What other reason holds for such use of Sunday time?

*Ans.* The great thoughts of religion are restful and happy thoughts, such as weary men need.

What further reason can you name?

*Ans.* The temper of religion is good to weld together human society into a nobler brotherhood.

What other holidays do men observe in our country besides Sunday?

Why do we keep Christmas as a holiday?

What great and good thought has the day come to stand for?

*Ans.* It may be called “the festival of friendliness.”

What fitness is there in associating a festival of friendliness with the name of Jesus?

What does Easter Day stand for?

*Ans.* It is the festival of hope.

From what beautiful thought does hope spring?

*Ans.* Hope instinctively springs from the thought or the memory of great and beneficent lives. To admire goodness is to see God; and to see God is to hope for good.

Why do we specially love Jesus' religion?

*Ans.* Because it is the religion of hope.

What patriotic holidays do we keep?

What is the highest and happiest mood in which to keep a patriotic festival?

*Ans.* Our best mood at all times is the friendly, reverent, gladsome mood; in short, the mood of our religion.

## XXIII.

### PRAYER, OR COMMUNION WITH GOD.

What does a young child expect in begging a parent for favors?

*Ans.* He thinks that he can move or bend the parent's will to do his own will.

What does the child learn as he grows more mature?

*Ans.* He learns that his parent's will is better than his own will; in other words, that a good parent lives in order to do his best for the children.

What does the good son of a good father seek?

*Ans.* He seeks to find what the father's will is, and to defer to it.

What is the highest relation between the child and the parent?

*Ans.* It is the relation of sympathy, or communion, when both seek together to show their good will, as, for example, for the welfare of the younger children.

What kind of children ask most from their parents?

*Ans.* The ignorant and selfish demand most.

What kind of children enjoy most the society of good parents, and ask least of them?

*Ans.* Those who are most intelligent and affectionate.

What do childish and ignorant people expect to gain by their prayers to God?

*Ans.* They expect to change God's will, so as to get their wishes.

What is the nature of God's will?

*Ans.* God's will is constant, seeking always the good of his children.

What is the nature of childish men's wills?

*Ans.* Men's wills are often selfish, discordant with each other, and inconstant.

What shall we say of the prayers of selfishness?

*Ans.* They are like the wishes of the ignorant children.

What sort of a universe do we think this to be?

*Ans.* It is a divine universe, in which all things are made to work together for good.

What sort of prayers fit into, or agree with, the ruling purpose of this Universe?

*Ans.* The prayers of good will, or love, move along with the divine forces.

What is the highest wish of the wise, or "all-round," man?

*Ans.* His wish is to do the will of God, or to bend his own will to the Good-will.

What is the highest form of prayer?

*Ans.* It is in the words "Thy will be done."

What is communion with God?

*Ans.* It is the mood of the soul when we rest, and are glad in the thought of God's love, which we share.

What is the characteristic of the hours of true prayer, or communion?

*Ans.* They are our best or clearest hours, when we are most intelligent and alive, when therefore we can best see what is well for us and for others.

From whose inspiration do true prayers for beneficent things come?

*Ans.* The good thoughts and wishes flow from their source in the divine life, with which, at our best, we are in fullest connection, like the electrical wire that carries the current.

What is the law of true prayer?

*Ans.* The law is that the desirable or beneficent things must come to pass. This is the nature of God's world.

What have we to do besides wishing or willing toward good?

*Ans.* We must work or act also. To labor is to pray.

What is the whole significance of prayer?

*Ans.* It is the throwing all the power that is in us into the direction of good.

What happens when we throw ourselves into the work of good will?

*Ans.* The power and the love of God then work in and through us.

Why do not good men at once obtain their good wishes?

*Ans.* This is a world of law, of conditions, and of orderly processes of growth. Time is also a condition. The man whose wish for good is small will not effect so much as he who "hungers and thirsts for righteousness." The few will not attain so soon as when the many join in the prayer that the kingdom of God may come.

## XXIV.

### ORDER AND MIRACLE.

What is the most wonderful fact in the outward world ?

*Ans.* Its beautiful order.

When we say that things move by natural laws, what do we mean ?

*Ans.* We mean that order, or law, is the expression of the constant good will of God.

Why is the wonderful order specially beneficent ?

*Ans.* Because in a world of order we know what to depend upon. The order stands for God's truth, or faithfulness.

How do we account for the new and strange things that sometimes happen ?

*Ans.* We learn that the things which we call "strange" also belong to the beneficent order.

What did people in early times call those things which excited their wonder ?

*Ans.* They called them miracles. Thus the Northern Lights would have seemed a miracle to the Hebrews.

What was the ancient thought about "miracles" ?

*Ans.* Men supposed that miracles were worked by the direct power of God ; they were signs of God.

What is the best thought to-day?

*Ans.* The best thought now is that all things are by the power of God. All nature is his handwriting.

Are men ever thought to "work miracles" now?

Do we know the limits to the powers of our human nature?

Has man reached the limits of the possibilities of the universe?

Which is the most noble conception of the world, that in which God is thought of as interposing here and there in order to set things right, or that in which all things move together to do his orderly will?

XXV.

**PROVIDENCE.**

How far does the order of the world go?

*Ans.* Science shows that every grain of sand or mote of dust belongs to the order.

What did Jesus mean by saying that "the hairs of your head are all numbered"?

*Ans.* He meant that the care of God for his children covers their lives.

What force holds all things together in the outward world?

*Ans.* We call it the force of gravitation.

What holds all the lives of men likewise?

*Ans.* The love of God.

Is this fact more wonderful than the other?

*Ans.* No, the former may be called "a parable" of the latter and deeper fact.

What is the fact called that all the things which touch human life are held in the unity or plan of love?

*Ans.* This fact is called "Providence," meaning that God provides.

What did early men think about Providence?

*Ans.* They supposed that Providence was partial, and that God had favorites.

What is the truer thought?

*Ans.* We believe that God's providence is universal, and that it regards all our lives.

Is there less or more love shown in this larger thought of Providence?

To what may we liken the old idea of Providence?

*Ans.* We may liken it to the thought of children playing in their father's shop, who fancy that the blocks and shavings on the floor are made for their benefit.

To what may we liken the higher thought of providence?

*Ans.* We liken it to the thought of the grown son who has learned to use his father's tools and to assist in his work.

## XXVI.

### THE PROBLEM OF EVIL.

What things can you name which mankind have accounted as "evil"?

What common way did men once use of explaining the evil things?

*Ans.* They thought that there were evil beings who did men harm, or that God inflicted trouble in his anger.

To what new opinion have men come about things once considered evil?

*Ans.* We no longer think labor a curse; we see the uses of storms and lightning; we have learned that even volcanoes and earthquakes are a part of the process of world-building.

What great idea changes our view about evil?

*Ans.* The thought of a divine universe leaves no room for any evil power or evil being.

Why can there be no real or lasting evil in a divine universe?

*Ans.* Because evil is mischief, ill will, and therefore disorder and chaos: whereas a universe is the realm of order, beauty, and beneficence.

What truth is there in saying that evil is only relative?

*Ans.* A weed is not evil by itself. It may be beautiful. It is only an evil *in relation to* our gardens.

Can you show that there is good in pain?

*Ans.* Hunger and thirst are a kind of pain; but they are good, and not evil. Discomfort is a pain; but it stirs men to build houses and to become civilized.

Would it be possible to know enjoyment if one never knew any suffering?

Can you show that death is not evil?

*Ans.* If the universe is good, death, being one of its processes, cannot be evil. Death really makes way for life. To those especially who live the good life, death—a physical process—can do no harm.

On what ground is any one justified in wishing for life?

*Ans.* On the ground that by living one may serve and manifest good will.

On what ground, therefore, may one trust in view of death?

*Ans.* One may trust that in dying also one may still serve the Good-Will.

What noble hope lifts good men's eyes above the fear of death?

How do we learn the values of things?

*Ans.* We learn the value of a thing by doing the work which it costs to get it.

What law do we find here?

*Ans.* The law of cost.

How does the law of cost apply to truth or the love of our friends?

*Ans.* We learn the values of truth and love by paying a price for them.

What kind of price does love or truth often cost?

*Ans.* Love and truth require more or less suffering.

What name may we give to this kind of price, by which we buy the prizes of the life of the soul?

*Ans.* We may call pain a sort of "moral labor."

Is this law of moral cost or labor by which we learn the value of love a good law?

*Ans.* Yes, the more men bear or do for love's sake, the more they love. Such cost never hurts them.

Why could not men have life, joy, rest, truth, and love without any cost or trouble?

*Ans.* This would be to suppose that they were not men. Men must grow; and they must live in a world that grows, in which, therefore, they have to be constantly adjusting themselves to new conditions.

What have all kinds of pain to do with growth?

*Ans.* Pain and discontent spur us on to grow.

To what may we also liken the lessons of "evil"?

*Ans.* They are like the stops, the dots, and the dashes in the writing, which, if it went on smoothly in one continuous line, would give us no sense.

What, then, is the law of life?

*Ans.* It is a law of rhythm, of light and shade, of hunger and satisfaction, of labor and rest, of cares and love.

What is the word of God to the soul?

*Ans.* The command of God is to grow, and never to stop growing.

What is the noble attitude of the soul toward labor and pain ?

*Ans.* The noble attitude is that of fearlessness, as of God's sons.

Whose have been the greatest and happiest lives ?

*Ans.* Those lives have been greatest which have thus nobly faced and borne all that life brought.

What was Jesus' great word about happiness ?

*Ans.* Jesus' word was that one must never try to save one's own life,—that is, to run away from his work,—but one must lose his life,—that is, give it up whenever duty, truth, or love bids.

Is great joy consistent with suffering ?

*Ans.* Jesus' life proves this.

Why do we say, " Deliver us from evil," if evil can be good ?

*Ans.* As hunger, being good, drives us to relieve hunger, so as not to be hurt by it, so evil drives us to escape from it, and not to be left in evil.

## XXVII.

### SIN, OR MORAL EVIL.

What is it to do right?

*Ans.* To do right is in some way to help increase the sum of good in the world.

To what may we liken the doing right?

*Ans.* It is as though the will of man, like an electric wire, being put in connection, carried force to make light.

What is it to do wrong?

*Ans.* To do wrong is to check or lessen the good in the world. It is as though the wire were out of connection, or as though it carried force to hurt and burn.

What happens to a man's own life when he does wrong?

*Ans.* He lessens or harms his own life. For the way of right in a divine universe is the way of life.

If a man knew enough, would he ever do wrong?

*Ans.* No, if a man could see as God sees, he would never wish to do wrong.

Why is it that men ever do wrong?

*Ans.* The reason is that men are like children.

What is sin?

*Ans.* Sin is the expression of an ill-will.

Would it be sin if with good intention one did harm through ignorance?

*Ans.* No, nothing is really sin which proceeds from good-will.

How can we sin in a good universe?

*Ans.* This is a good universe, but man is a growing creature. Sin belongs to the process of his growth.

What is the beginning of man's growth?

*Ans.* His growth proceeds out of his animal nature.

What is the character of the animal nature?

*Ans.* It is selfish and egotistic.

Does the animal or the little child sin in being selfish?

*Ans.* No, selfishness is a part of the lower, or animal, nature.

Where does selfish conduct begin to be sin?

*Ans.* Selfishness begins to be sin when the person awakens to see that his selfishness does injustice to others.

Is it an evil thing or good that selfishness becomes conscious of doing injustice?

*Ans.* The consciousness of sin is a step of growth upward. The tiger, for example, is unconscious of being selfish.

What is the trouble with selfishness?

*Ans.* Selfishness fancies that life is for the sake of the individual creature. Selfishness goes its own way without regard to the good of others.

In what does moral growth, or the growth of the soul, consist?

*Ans.* The growth of a soul consists in outgrowing selfishness, till love becomes the law of the life.

Is it nature to outgrow selfishness ?

*Ans.* Yes, it is man's higher nature.

What is the truth to which this growth leads ?

*Ans.* The truth is that the life of each is in the fulness of the life of all, as the health of each cell in the body depends upon the health of the whole body.

What sort of pain urges the soul toward this growth ?

*Ans.* The pains or pricks of conscience make a beneficent unrest for the soul.

Of what deep fact does conscience remind us ?

*Ans.* Conscience tells us of an ideal life—that is, a better self—to which we have not yet attained.

Is the fact that a man is less than his ideal self, or the perfect man, a real evil ?

*Ans.* It is not an evil at all, if he is growing toward his ideal.

What happens if a man does not grow better, but remains selfish, or animal ?

*Ans.* It is a law of the world that no "bad" thing can remain : it must either grow better or perish.

To what may we liken some kinds of moral evil, or sin ?

*Ans.* We liken them to disease.

What is the working of disease in the physical realm ?

*Ans.* The working of disease is to urge men to avoid it and to seek health and life.

What is the working of sin in the moral realm ?

*Ans.* Sin, as soon as it shows its really repulsive character, urges men to avoid it, and to seek moral health and life.

Why does sin ever seem attractive or tempting ?

*Ans.* It is tempting only so far as we do not yet know what it means.

## XXVIII.

### PENALTIES.

What is a “law of nature”?

*Ans.* It is the mode in which force, or life, expresses itself most efficiently. The laws of nature may be likened to highways for travel.

Is it accurate to say that a law of nature is ever “broken”?

*Ans.* No, it is truer to say that the person is “broken” who transgresses the law.

What illustration can you give of the penalties that attend the breaking of the laws of nature? Take, for example, the laws of health.

What good do such penalties do?

*Ans.* They warn us by their pain and resistance to return to the highway of law.

What is a moral law?

*Ans.* It is the mode in which justice or love most efficiently expresses itself. A moral law is the highway where good-will travels.

What is moral penalty, or punishment?

*Ans.* It is the pain or resistance that attends a soul in leaving the highway of right.

What good comes from such pain?

*Ans.* The pain warns us to “keep to the right.”

What idea do human laws aim to express?

*Ans.* Human laws warn people that the way of justice is the way of happiness, and that injustice brings pain; in short, that "no good thing is failure, and no evil thing success."

What is often the fault with human punishment?

*Ans.* Punishment often expresses men's anger and ill-will, or it is not intelligently directed to make the ill-doer better.

Are all true penalties, then, for the sake of beneficence?

*Ans.* Yes, all penalties are in order to secure lasting good.

Why can we not conceive a good God as punishing a disobedient soul forever?

*Ans.* Punishment would be foolish and futile if it did not succeed in turning the wrong-doer into the way of good-will.

What is the nature of all true penalties?

*Ans.* They have actual relation to the offence. Thus, if a man is false, it is a natural penalty that he loses the trust of his fellows.

How do real penalties work on the human will?

*Ans.* They persuade the man's intelligence that wrong hurts him: they also persuade his sympathy, as he discovers that wrong hurts others, and especially those whom he loves.

What is the greatest of all the penalties of wrong?

*Ans.* The worst result of wrong is that it shuts off the life of man from the source of its health and joy in the life of God. As the body cannot live without air to breathe, so the soul of man cannot have life apart from God.

Do penalties alone ever cure moral evil?

XXIX.

**THE CURE OF EVIL.**

Can any one do wrong and suffer alone?

*Ans.* No, the innocent always suffer directly or indirectly with the guilty.

Is this rule fair?

*Ans.* It could not be otherwise in a moral universe, wherein all lives are bound together.

What is the other side of this stern rule?

*Ans.* It is by the same rule that all good is also shared.

What was the glory of Jesus' life?

*Ans.* Jesus turned evil into good.

How did he turn evil into good?

*Ans.* He met men's selfishness and injustice with his good-will. The more wrong he suffered, the more courage, patience, and friendliness he showed.

What was the result of thus turning the light of his good-will upon everything that happened?

*Ans.* His own life grew larger, and good-will spread around him.

What wonderful thing happened after he had died?

*Ans.* All the evil which he suffered ceased, but the good went on growing in the world. Thus he overcame evil with good.

What is this law of overcoming evil with good sometimes called?

*Ans.* It has been called the law of "atonement."

What does this word mean?

*Ans.* It is the name of the method by which men are brought into oneness with God.

How far does this rule go?

*Ans.* It is universal. Whoever bears any kind of suffering with good-will is in oneness with God.

What right does such a sufferer buy?

*Ans.* All noble sufferers buy the right to help and comfort others, and thus to pass on the good-will.

What illustrations can you give of the breadth of this rule?

*Ans.* The good mother wins the right, by her patience, to carry the influence of love wherever she goes. The patriot by shedding his blood, or the reformer by his struggles and risks, likewise spreads liberty and truth.

Why do we say that the good man buys good?

*Ans.* Because by "the law of cost" nothing good comes without labor.

What would compensate a good man for any pain or loss that he had ever borne?

*Ans.* It would be ample compensation to know that he had turned the pain into lasting good for others.

What is the "gospel" about all pain?

*Ans.* The gospel, or good news, is that no pain or suffering is lost, but the men of good-will are always turning their pains into good.

Can you recall facts in your own experience where you were able to see good coming out of “evil”?

Did any evil thing ever harm you which you met with good-will?

What may we finally say cures moral evil or stops sin?

*Ans.* Love with its willing sacrifices cures and stops evil.

May we say that love or moral health is “catching”?

*Ans.* There is nothing that spreads and “catches” like good-will.

XXX.

**FORGIVENESS.**

If a man has done you wrong, how ought you to feel toward him?

Is it possible to feel precisely the same as though he had done right?

*Ans.* No, he is not the same man as though he had done right.

Is it possible to feel good-will toward him?

*Ans.* Yes, it is possible to have good-will toward the worst man.

How should you still treat him?

*Ans.* With friendliness.

Is friendliness the same in its expression toward an ill-doer as toward a good man?

*Ans.* No, in the former case friendliness may even demand severity, as when a house-breaker is confined in prison.

Can an evil-doer change his character, and make himself better without help?

What is the most effective help to change a wrong-doer from bad conduct to good?

*Ans.* We have seen that the power of friendliness is efficient to change the wrong-doer.

Can friendliness effect such a change without labor?

*Ans.* No, it is the nature of friendliness to put forth labor and to bear pain in order to accomplish its ends.

What do we call the kind of sorrow or pain that one feels at having done wrong?

*Ans.* We call it repentance.

What is genuine and satisfactory repentance?

*Ans.* It is such a sense of the harm done by the wrong, and especially of the harm done to others, that the wrong-doer will never do the wrong again.

When a man thus repents "from his heart," how do we feel toward him?

*Ans.* We feel satisfaction in him.

Can we treat him as though he had never done the wrong?

*Ans.* We may even treat him with greater confidence than ever before. For he may have now become a better man than he was.

What is the act when we take back any one who has done us wrong to our confidence and intimacy?

*Ans.* It is forgiveness.

Can we forgive any one before he has repented?

*Ans.* We can take the attitude of forgiveness and be ready to forgive, but we cannot trust any one before he has shown himself worthy of our confidence.

What is "the attitude of forgiveness"?

*Ans.* It is sympathy.

How can we sympathize with an evil doer?

*Ans.* Our sympathy shows us the harm that he does to himself, also the circumstances which led him into temptation.

Why can we not be forgiven ourselves unless we forgive?

*Ans.* To forgive is to have good-will, or friendliness. Unless, then, we have good-will, we are ourselves in a wrong mood.

How is the unforgiving person on the same level with the wrong-doer?

*Ans.* They are both living in ill-will.

What is the root of all sin?

*Ans.* Selfishness or an ill-will is the root of all wrongdoing.

How may we say that God is always ready to forgive?

*Ans.* God is good-will, or love; and love always stands ready to forgive.

In what way does God's forgiveness differ from ours?

*Ans.* We cannot read men's hearts: we are therefore mistaken in our judgments and disappointed in men's conduct. If we were perfectly wise, we should never be disappointed in men's conduct. Thus God cannot be surprised or disappointed.

Is it practicable to take the divine attitude of forgiveness toward degraded and hurtful men?

*Ans.* Yes, as a matter of fact, the men who succeed in the management of our reformatories and reform schools are habitually as patient, pitiful, and friendly to their inmates as the physicians in a hospital. Thus they show the divine good-will. The good mother shows the same patience toward her children.

How has the thought of man's growth in a growing world altered our conception of forgiveness and made it easy to forgive?

*Ans.* We have come to think of moral evil, or sin, as so many forms of animalism, moral childishness, ignorance, immaturity, "arrested development," or moral disease. Many of these forms seem to us repulsive and terrible. But they command our pity for the men and women who are without moral health.

What active effect results from this view of sin?

*Ans.* This view gives us courage and confidence in our efforts to cure evil. For we know that the divine life is mightier than any disease, and that man's destiny is to grow in the way of the soul's health.

What, finally, may we say is the essence of the idea of forgiveness?

*Ans.* It is the friendly intent to help the wrong-doer, and to bring him into the way of life.

## XXXI.

### THE AWAKENING OF THE SOUL.

In the course of the growth of the mind how do we often characterize the intellectual condition of children and others?

*Ans.* We speak of them as immature.

What intellectual faults belong specially with immaturity?

*Ans.* Conceit, inaccuracy, narrowness, and bigotry are apt to go with immaturity of mind.

How do we likewise characterize the moral condition of many persons?

*Ans.* We find that their souls have not yet awakened.

What great fault goes generally with moral dulness or apathy?

*Ans.* The dull or unawakened soul is selfish.

Under what delusion does such a soul live?

*Ans.* The unawakened or selfish soul imagines that it is the centre about which the universe revolves.

In the course of the development of the mind what important crises sometimes come?

*Ans.* The mind has moments of awakening, when it catches sight of new and larger interests.

Can we sometimes remember the time when we first

fairly waked up to a new intellectual interest, such as literature, history, poetry, art, or music?

What sort of influence awakens men to new intellectual life?

*Ans.* The influence of a great book or a notable teacher frequently stirs the mind. The awakening is also a process in the growth of the mind.

What is the result of such an awakening?

*Ans.* The result of mental growth is the power to see more truth. Light awakens the mind, and the awakened mind perceives the light.

Are there periods of moral or spiritual growth analogous to these times of intellectual awakening?

*Ans.* Yes, often. Thus a new friendship may be an awakening of the soul. So the performance of a difficult duty often stirs a sense of the inner life.

What is the inner or moral life?

*Ans.* It is the healthy movement of the good-will or the life of God in our souls. Love awakens the soul, and the awakened soul perceives the joy and beauty of true love.

How does the teaching of love dispel the error of selfishness?

*Ans.* Love illuminates life, showing us that all things and our souls likewise move together to do the beneficent will of God.

To what may the awakening of a soul be likened?

*Ans.* The awakening of a soul may be likened to the flowering of a plant as it grows toward the producing of fruit.

What name was once given to this natural process of the awakening of the soul?

*Ans.* It was called "conversion."

What fault may be found with the use of this word?

*Ans.* It implied that the person who had been "converted" had been going wrong.

When would the word "conversion" be fitly used?

*Ans.* It might be used of a man who, having become unjust, impure, or vicious, changed from the bad course to the good life.

When would the word "conversion" be misapplied?

*Ans.* It would have no meaning in the case of children trained from their infancy to love the right and to do it.

What other expression has often been used for the awakening of a soul?

*Ans.* "The new birth."

What significance is in this expression?

*Ans.* The birth of the physical life is a parable of the birth or beginning of the life of duty, service, truth, love,—the life of a child of God.

Is there only one "new birth" of the soul?

*Ans.* In the process of the moral and spiritual development there may repeatedly be periods of new vision or awakening, after each of which life grows larger.

How do such periods of ampler life come?

*Ans.* They come by no striving after them, but simply by going in the straight way of duty.

What hope for each soul is involved in this truth?

*Ans.* The promise is that, if we live aright, life is better with the added years. In other words, the soul does not grow old.

Cite instances to prove this fact.

## XXXII.

### OUR IDEALS.

What do we mean by our “ideal” of a thing?

*Ans.* We mean the thing at its best, or as it ought to be. Thus the artist’s ideal is the picture as he sees it in his vision.

What is a moral ideal?

*Ans.* It is the most perfect conduct or the most noble life that we can imagine.

What sort of command do our ideals lay upon us?

*Ans.* They are the law, the model, or the pattern for our work.

How can that be a law or pattern which is not seen, but only thought?

*Ans.* We have agreed that this is a universe in which the eternal things are invisible. The realm of thought is more real and lasting than the world of things.

What is the philosophy to explain the fact of man’s ideals?

*Ans.* Our ideals seem to be the transcript in our minds of the thought of God. Thus our ideal of beauty, of justice, of faithfulness, may be conceived of as the prompting of God.

What interesting parable of these things do we find in the science of geometry?

*Ans.* No one ever has seen a perfect or ideal circle. Nevertheless, the circle is eternal in the realm of thought, while all the circles that men see with their eyes pass away.

How is it that men's ideals differ from one another?

*Ans.* So far as men's ideals differ, it is because our intelligence only imperfectly learns to grasp the thought of God. In respect, however, to the great and important things men's ideals tend to agree.

How can you show that men's moral ideals tend to agree?

*Ans.* As regards the noblest ideal of conduct, the best thinkers and the greatest men of the world prove to have substantially the same vision.

What does this tendency show?

*Ans.* It shows that the ideal of the noble life, like the perfect circle, is eternal, while man's soul grows to meet it.

Do you believe that any actual human life has absolutely reached the ideal?

What do our ideals do for us?

*Ans.* They humble us, and show us the incompleteness of our lives.

Are we to be blamed for not reaching our ideals?

*Ans.* We cannot be blamed at all if we are struggling toward them. Nevertheless, it is a wholesome disquietude that we are not satisfied with ourselves or our work.

What do our ideals do besides humbling us?

*Ans.* They cheer, comfort, exalt, and inspire us. For they remind us that we are sons of God, thinking his magnificent thoughts and living his life of good-will.

What does it mean to be able to conceive a life of moral perfection and harmony?

*Ans.* It means that we who conceive such a life are of the divine nature.

What may that life be called which is lived toward a noble ideal, and is therefore inspired, controlled, and shaped by this ideal?

*Ans.* This ideal life may be called "the health of the soul."

By what other name have we considered it?

*Ans.* We have called it the "universe life," meaning that it holds good everywhere and at all times.

What relation have Jesus' life and teachings to this health of the soul?

*Ans.* Jesus' life and teachings serve conspicuously to point out and illustrate the way of health and goodness.



### XXXIII.

## THE COMMUNION OF THE SAINTS, OR TRUE HUMAN SOCIETY.

What is the characteristic fact when friends enjoy each other's companionship?

*Ans.* The friends at such times express love toward each other.

What things tend to break or hurt friendship?

*Ans.* Egotism, ill-will, selfishness, break the current, as it were, and leave the individual alone.

What restores the circuit of life, and brings the individual back from his solitariness?

*Ans.* The motion of friendliness restores the circuit of life.

What faults do you see in the ordinary relations of human society?

*Ans.* The great faults among men are rivalry, jealousy, suspicion, enmity, the competition of selfish wills.

What is the result when men work "at cross purposes"?

*Ans.* The result is friction, heat, waste, and sometimes ruin.

What is the true idea of efficient human effort?

*Ans.* The true idea is co-operation.

What is the pattern of a human society bound together for co-operation?

*Ans.* The pattern of such good society is the family.

In a united family how are the wills of the brothers and sisters related to each other?

*Ans.* They are parallel, or, in other words, they point the same way.

What is the only direction in which human wills can permanently point together?

*Ans.* It is the way of the Good-Will.

What happens when all the wills of a family or group are parallel?

*Ans.* They share the current of the divine forces.

What is often said of the working of human rivalry and competition?

*Ans.* It is said that men thus put forth more energy.

How far is this true?

*Ans.* It is true in the animal world, where creatures struggle together for existence.

Is this quite true in the animal world?

*Ans.* No, there is a deep principle of co-operation among animals that groups them together in herds, in flocks, and in hives, so as to help one another.

Is human society to-day really organized on the principle of rivalry and competition?

*Ans.* No, society is coming to be more and more closely organized together, so that men may co-operate and help one another, as in unions and nations.

Can a selfish man, working in rivalry with his neighbors, do more service in the world than a good man acting in good-will?

*Ans.* No, other things being equal, there is no such spring of energy or courage as love furnishes. Illustrate this by example, for instance, among the great teachers, patriots, and reformers.

Does the law of co-operation allow any “competition”?

*Ans.* There is a good competition, or rather emulation, as when scholars try to do their best, or farmers to make each an ideal farm.

How may you describe such beneficent competition?

*Ans.* In honest emulation, the lines on which men move are the parallel lines of good-will; whereas, in selfish competition, the lines interfere.

What happens when men do their best on the lines of good-will?

*Ans.* Mankind gets the utmost service from each.

What happens when men compete on the lines that interfere?

*Ans.* One man’s gain is then more or less at another’s loss, and therefore at a net loss for all.

How will you characterize all honest business in the world?

*Ans.* Honest business is such as goes on the lines of good-will.

What is the famous law of such business?

*Ans.* It is the idea of the Golden Rule.

Does the same law hold good between nations?

Is it good for one nation that another suffers disaster?

What was Jesus' idea of human society?

*Ans.* It is the society of friendly men living together as in God's world.

Can you think of a better ideal of human society?

What has this kind of society sometimes been called?

*Ans.* The society of the men of good-will has been called the Church.

Whom would the Church include?

*Ans.* It ought to include all those whose lives run on the lines of good-will.

Is anything else necessary in order to be a member of this "good society"?

What is meant when men pray that the "kingdom of God" may come?

*Ans.* It is the wish that all men may be bound together in good-will.

How can any one help to bring this prayer to pass?

*Ans.* Any one may put his own life upon the lines of the kingdom of God.

Is this practicable yet?

*Ans.* Yes, there is no real and hearty life in any other way. When we let love have free flow through our souls, we truly live.

In this sense, when may a soul be said to be "saved"?

*Ans.* A soul is saved when it has come out of its selfish isolation, and become a sound and healthy unit for the making of true human society.

What therefore would be "universal salvation"?

*Ans.* It would be when all men and all nations are organized together in the bonds of the divine humanity.

XXXIV.

**THE GOSPEL: A SUMMARY.**

What did we agree that man wants, in order to satisfy the deep needs of his nature?

*Ans.* Man wants to know what sort of a world this is, what kind of Power it is that rules it, whether this Power cares for men and loves them, and what we ought to do in order to come into accord with this great Power or Life.

Into what terms did we discover that all things have to be translated?

*Ans.* Into the terms of the world of thought.

What is the only possible interpretation of a world of order, beauty, and thought?

*Ans.* Our intelligence compels us to call it good or beneficent.

Taking the clew of beneficence or good-will, how do we find that it applies?

*Ans.* We find that "all things work together for good."

What beautiful proof do we see of this?

*Ans.* We see that the long and marvellous cosmic processes have resulted together in making a world where the "Christ" life is already the rule or ideal.

How does the idea of beneficence, or of God's world, apply to our own lives?

*Ans.* We find, whenever we live as though this were God's

world, that our lives are at their best. In other words, this kind of life meets the facts of the world.

What secret do we discover to take away the fear of evil?

*Ans.* We find that evil is daily overcome by good. Good-will facing evil transmutes it into terms of larger life.

What great historical life stands as a witness of this fact?

*Ans.* Jesus' life, which seemed to be sacrificed to men's hate, proves to have conquered hate and to have left love behind it.

What "gospel," or good news, may we tell to immature persons?

*Ans.* We may give them the hope of the awakening of their souls to new life.

How may this be?

*Ans.* On the lines of good-will men grow, as the plants grow, to periods of blossom and fruitage.

What good news may we tell to those who have already begun the good life?

*Ans.* As they move toward their ideals, they shall come to new visions of moral beauty and to nobler levels of life.

How do we know these facts?

*Ans.* We have an illustrious record of human experience in this direction.

What gospel may we tell to "the bad"?

*Ans.* It is a gospel that the bad life is not man's true nature. It is a gospel that he can forsake, and ought to forsake the evil way, and that he will then become like a new creature, as soon as he lets the electric touch of good-will move his soul.

III

What do we make of the brutal struggles that divide men?

*Ans.* We find that the brutal kinds of struggle are the survivals of the animal world.

What gospel do we discover for human society?

*Ans.* We find a new law of the sons of God,—the law of co-operation,—which binds homes, neighbors, friends, and nations in firmer bonds of happiness.

What do all these things work together to show?

*Ans.* They urge the faith that we live in a divine universe, where no evil thing prospers and no good thing ever fails.

What is our instinctive feeling in the thought of such a universe?

*Ans.* Our feeling is of rest, satisfaction, gladness, and willing obedience.

Is this the faith of the few only or of many?

*Ans.* It is the growing faith of many.

What becomes of older forms of faith?

*Ans.* The forms of religion held by all genuine men may be thought of as so many different dialects, which are at last coming to be translated into one simpler and universal language.

What was the ancient test of true doctrine?

*Ans.* Men said that was true which had been held “everywhere, always, and by all.”

What kind of truths alone meet this severe test?

*Ans.* The great, simple, essential things, such as help men to live, meet this test.

Is it important to express our faith in any single form?

Is there anything in the following form which good men everywhere may not substantially agree in?

We believe in God, the Father eternal, whose righteousness, wisdom, and love are in and through all things.

We believe in the holy spirit of cheerfulness, charity, and peace, which we would win and maintain.

We believe in truthfulness, in honesty, in reverence, in generous giving, in purity of thought and life.

We believe that we owe our lives to the service of our kindred, our neighbors, the State, and mankind.

We believe that obedience to duty is the way of life, and that no one can do wrong without suffering harm.

We believe that no real harm can befall the righteous in life or death.

We believe in "Jesus' way," as the way of God's heroes, the teachers, helpers, and benefactors of mankind.

We hold to the brotherhood of those who love and serve man, and we hope for the Life Everlasting.



~~AUG 9 1 1980~~



